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(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): CAT TECH, INC. [US/US]; 1149 Ellsworth, Suite 327, Pasadena, TX 77506 (US).

(71) Applicant and

(72) Inventor: BRENNOM, Stephen [US/US]; 1149 Ellsworth, Suite 327, Pasadena, TX 77506 (US).

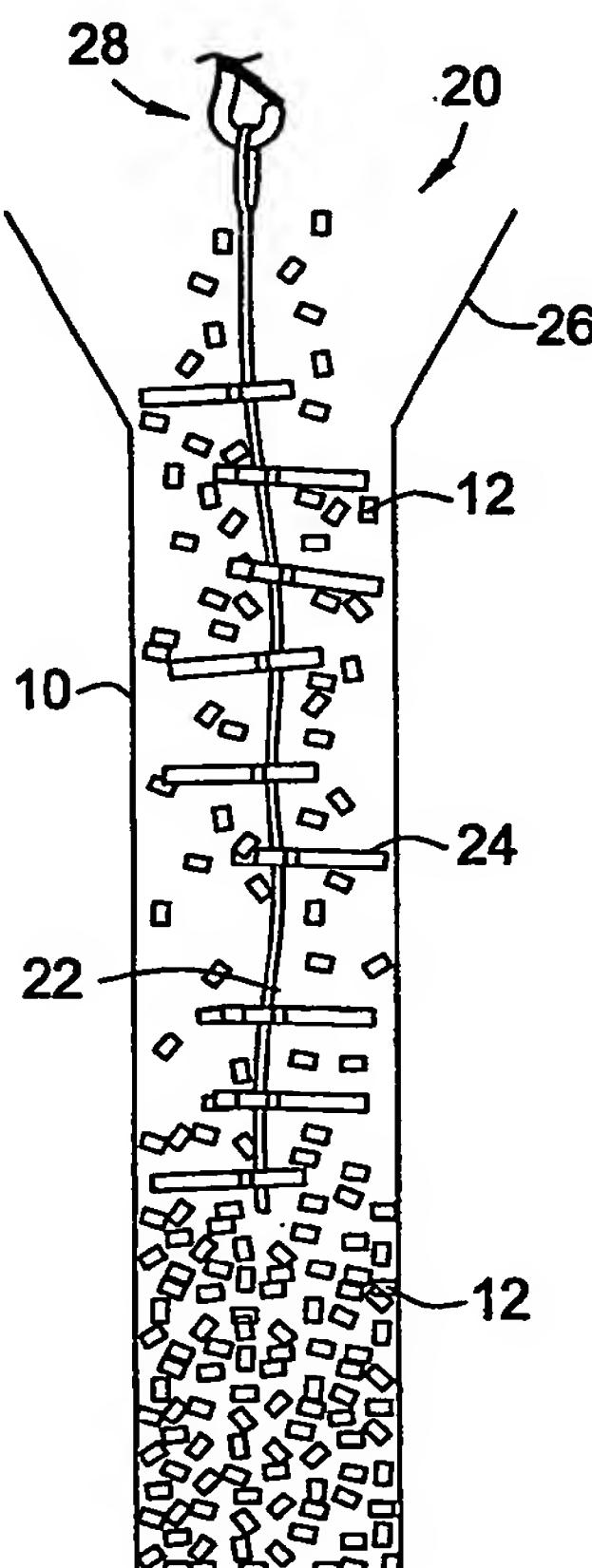
(74) Agents: PATTERSON, William, B. et al.; Moser, Patterson & Sheridan, L.L.P., 3040 Post Oak Boulevard, Suite 1500, Houston, TX 77056 (US).

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(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR LOADING CATALYST



(57) Abstract: Methods and apparatus are disclosed for filling solid particles into a vertical tube by conveying the particles downwardly into the tube along a loading tool that softens the fall of the particles and provides even filling of the tube. The loading tool includes a center member and a plurality of damper members that can be adapted in particular cases to the actual type of particles and the tube diameter. The damper members can be stiff or flexible since they do not occupy a substantial portion of the cross section of the tube at any particular axial location. In operation, the center member can be jerked during the filling operation while simultaneously being lifted up gradually as the tube fills or it can be sequentially lifted. The damper members reduce the falling velocity of the particles and divert the particles from falling in straight downward paths. This avoids bridge formation and breakage of the particles during filling.

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